

REMARKS

Claims 1-15 have been cancelled.

Claims 16-48 are pending.

Claims 16-48 stand rejected as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The independent claims 16, 27, and 38 have been amended to recite maintaining said base fluid substantially free from cation producing additives "that interfere with the anionic groups of said carboxylated guar polymers." As amended, the claims are supported by the specification and allowable.

Claims 16-48 stand rejected on double patenting on (1) *Dawson et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,017,855; (2) *Dawson et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,383,990; and (3) *Dawson et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,649,572. A terminal Disclaimer has been submitted for each of the foregoing *Dawson et al.* patents to remove that ground for rejection.

Claims 23-26 and 45-48 stand rejected as improper dependent claims. Claims 23, 25, 25 and 47 have been amended to place them in proper form. It is submitted that the claims are now in proper form and allowable.

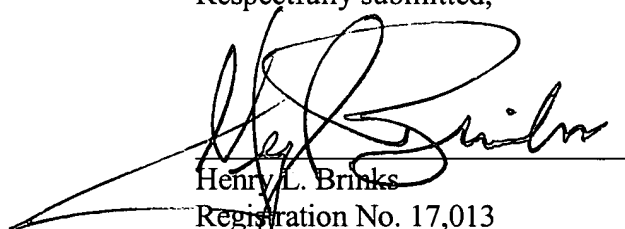
Claim 36 also is amended to change the form, and make it consistent with the form of claims 25 and 47, and believed to be allowable.

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SUMMARY

Pending Claims 16-48, as amended, are patentable. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner grant early allowance of this application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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